

**MM Fighters! Support Group Meeting**  
**February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023**  
**Virtual Meeting**

Dr. Mary Kwok returned this year to help us better understand the **Best of ASH** (The American Society of Hematologists). This year Dr. Kwok chose four categories of abstracts from the conference to focus on, all of which were of keen interest to our group. Please look at the slides which are attached to the email, or view the video link.

**Thought for the Month**

**“I have had one life and one chance to make it count for something. I am free to choose that something. My faith demands that I do whatever I can wherever I can, whenever I can, for as long as I can.”**

A great guiding statement, especially for the MM Fighters! March is Myeloma month, and a wonderful time to put this into action (please see below).

During Myeloma Month, there are some simple ways to help bring awareness to our disease!

**Defeat Myeloma**

This fundraiser for the Fred Hutch’s Myeloma research will take place on Sunday, June 25<sup>th</sup> at Magnuson Park in Seattle. Donations to this cause help fund grassroots research, making it possible to prove concepts and attract larger grants to fund clinical trials.

Sign up or donate at [www.defeatmyeloma.org](http://www.defeatmyeloma.org)!

Ways to support this important cause include:

- **Make a donation** – Matching funds are available if you act quickly (provided by a MM Fighter!). By ending your donation in “23” (such as \$123.00) you will access the matching funds while they last. Create your own team, join the MM Fighters team or support a friend...lots of options!
- **Join the fun** – Sign up for the fundraiser, which is free to Myeloma patients!
- **Create a team** – Create a team, ask friends to join and build a following to help spread the word!

**Support the IMF** (International Myeloma Foundation)!

This year they are featuring Myeloma stories. Go to [www.mam.myeloma.org](http://www.mam.myeloma.org) to share your story, post a video, etc. See the email forwarded from the IMF for more detail.

**Patient Roundtable**

Seth S. is doing well in Spokane, keeping a wonderful attitude despite battling numerous colds brought home by his children. Nice to be young and strong!

Annie T. is back at home after undergoing Car-T cell therapy at the FHCC. It was a long process, with lots of challenges along the way, but her Myeloma seems to be under control. Now she can concentrate on straightening out the side effects which have been a nuisance without worrying about the impact of any MM treatments!

A couple of interesting points from her experience: during the Car-T process, they took numerous handwriting samples and double checked what location they were in to help check for mental strength and recovery from the therapy. In addition, when undergoing Car-T, which is an expensive process, be sure that you can proceed all the way through before they start processing your T-cells, for if you drop out after the T-cells are being processed and grown in the lab, it could cost you \$340,000.....

Mike B. is 12 years into his Myeloma journey and 10 years with no maintenance.

Jon J. will be starting his own Car-T cell therapy on March 14<sup>th</sup>. Living outside of Seattle, he has been able to find support for the cost of hotels and food during the required stay near the FHCC during this procedure. Very happy to know such support is out there!

Andrea mentioned that there is a camp for under 18 children of cancer patients. Please go to [www.kesem.org](http://www.kesem.org) for more details.

David H. has faced some difficulties recently, including pneumonia and a heart attack. Fortunately, he is recovering and keeping his spirits positive, and we are looking forward to more good news from him!

Several members mentioned that they have created Smart Mailboxes that direct all their messages concerning Myeloma to be gathered in one place, allowing them to access this when the time is right. Different operating systems and servers handle this process in varying manners, so be sure to be specific when looking up directions.

Linda T. is in cycle 4 of her treatment, and getting ready to meet with the Stem Cell Transplant team to learn more about this process. At 71 she is a bit hesitant about undergoing such a treatment, but will be writing the group to better understand the experience from others point of view.

David M. is doing well in CA, and is into his journey 9 ½ years and very thankful for the doctors at the City of Hope who have found ways to effectively treat his back pain.

Bud H. has overcome numerous challenges at the end of last year and is back on his Regn5848 trial at Swedish, which has been very effective in dealing with his MM.

Neil J. is doing well and changing his medications,

Dorothy had a SCT at 75, and is doing well 2 year on.

**Next MM Fighters! Meetings:**

**Caregivers Meeting** – Saturday, March 4<sup>th</sup> – 10 – 11:30 AM Contact [mmfighters.caregivers@gmail.com](mailto:mmfighters.caregivers@gmail.com) for more information – **Virtual Meeting**

**NEXT VIRTUAL MEETING** – Saturday, March 25<sup>th</sup> – The Patient Experience – Part 2 – Dr. Banerjee – UW/FHCC– 10AM – 12:30 PM – **Virtual Meeting**